

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An intermediate steering column for a vehicle having a firewall, said intermediate steering column comprising:

a first U-joint connectable with a steering wheel of the vehicle;

a first shaft pivotally attached to said first U-joint and rotatable about a longitudinal axis of said first shaft upon rotation of said first U-joint;

a second shaft drivingly connected to said first shaft and having a slip joint connection with said first shaft permitting relative axial movement of said first and second shafts while maintaining a rotary drive connection between said first and second shafts;

a second U-joint pivotally attached to said second shaft and connectable with a steering mechanism of the vehicle; and

said first shaft comprising first and second shaft parts and a reusable quick disconnect joint between said first and second shaft parts permitting disconnection of said first and second shaft parts and pivoting of said first shaft part relative to said first U-joint to a first out of the way

position and pivoting of said second shaft and said second shaft part relative to said second U-joint to a second out of the way position and then further permitting reconnection of said first and second shaft parts by said quick disconnect joint, said quick disconnect joint including a fastener extending through both said first shaft part and said second shaft part of said first shaft.

2. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 1 wherein said first shaft part includes a first surface extending parallel to said longitudinal axis of said first shaft part engageable with a second surface on said second shaft part extending parallel to said first surface.

3. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 2 wherein said quick disconnect joint includes a fastener extending through said first and second surfaces.

4. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 1 wherein said second shaft part includes a tubular end into which said first shaft part extends.

5. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 4 wherein said quick disconnect joint includes a fastener extending through said tubular end of said

second shaft part and said first shaft part located within said tubular end.

6. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 1 wherein said quick disconnect joint includes a bolt extending through said first and second shaft parts and a nut threadably engaging said bolt.

7. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 6 further including a second bolt extending through said first and second shaft parts and a second nut threadably engaging said second bolt.

8. (original) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 1 wherein said first U-joint is located at least in part on a side of the firewall opposite a passenger compartment of the vehicle, said first shaft being for location at least in part on the side of the firewall opposite the passenger compartment.

9. (currently amended) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 1 wherein said fastener is releasable and, quick disconnect joint includes a releasable fastener which, when released, permits disconnection of said first and second shaft parts, said releasable fastener being operable to reconnect said first and second shaft parts.

10. (previously added) An intermediate steering column as defined in claim 1 wherein said quick disconnect joint is not destroyed during disconnection.